

**Ambulances on two wheels set for Hants**

Page 3



**Spotlight on youngsters ahead of London**

Page 5



**WIN a slice of classic Britpop!**

Page 23

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Thursday, February 27 - Wednesday, March 5, 2014

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# THE SIMS' ARE SLIM AND IN IT TO WIN!

## Couple going for national weight-loss prize

A SUPER-slimming Basingstoke couple have been shortlisted for a national award after shedding over nine stone between them in one year.

Tony and Laura Sims are the only couple from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight region to be nominated for Slimming World's Couple of the Year gong.

The pair joined the Popley branch of the weight-loss organisation in February last year, after realising their weight was making them unhappy and putting their health at risk.

Tony, 44, said: "I think it's easy for couples to become comfortable with one another and over time daily family life takes priority over your weight and health."

"Like most people our weight crept up gradually."

"But in February last year we realised we didn't recognise the people we saw in the mirror anymore and we knew it was affect-

By **James Booker**

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

ing our health, that was when we decided we had to do something."

Tony shed just over five-and-a-half stone, while 39-year-old Laura dropped three-and-a-half after following the company's Food Optimising Healthy Eating Plan.

Neither of them are now classed as being overweight, and they have been nominated for the national prize by their fellow slimmers.

Laura said: "I expected losing weight to be hard work but it hasn't been at all. We both feel great and I definitely feel like I've got the old Laura back!"

"I think what really worked for us was losing weight together because it meant we had support from each other as well as

from the rest of the group

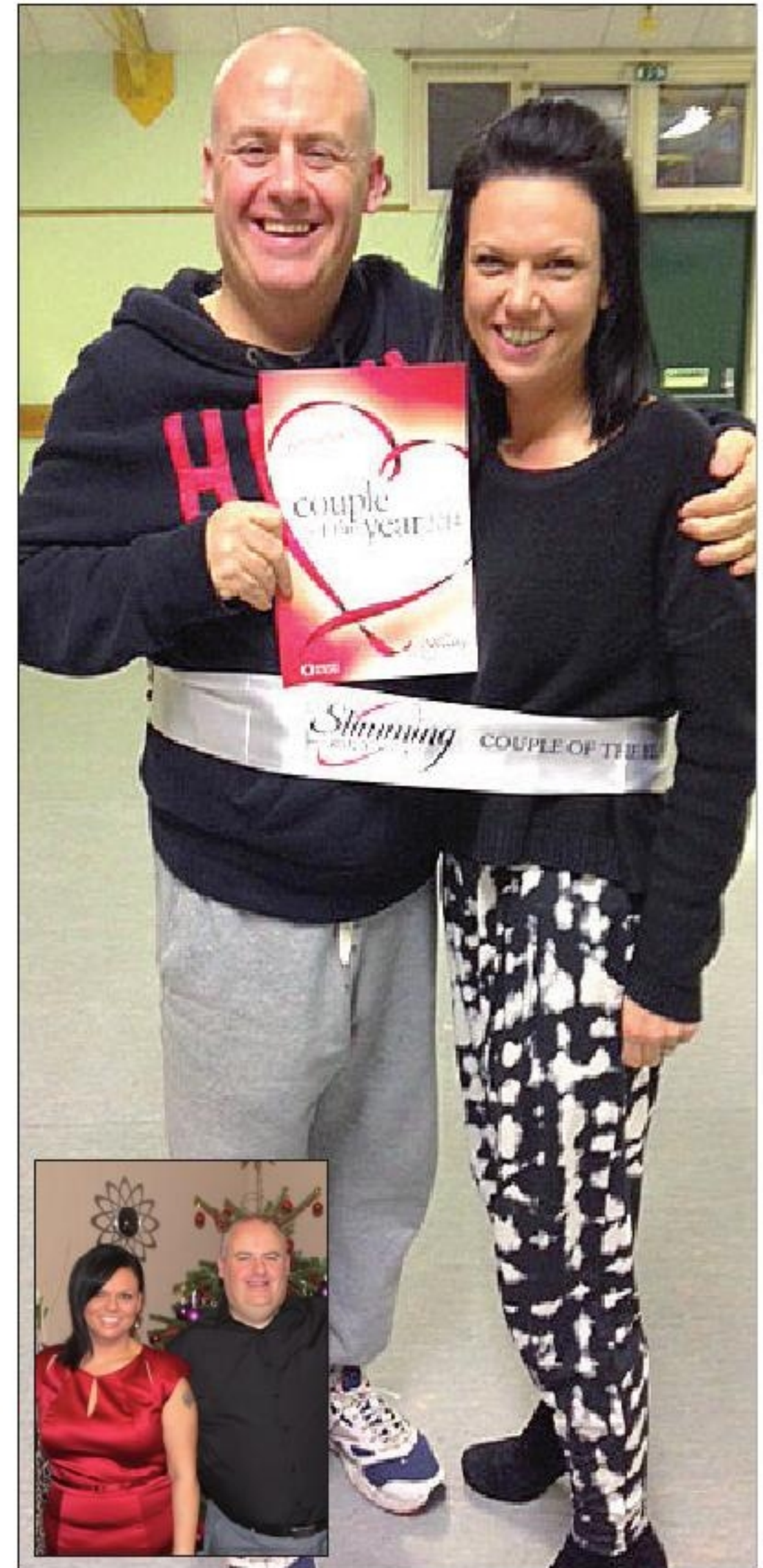
"I'd say our relationship is much stronger now. We do so much more together and love cooking our favourite recipes."

The couple will travel to Alfreton, Derbyshire in March for the semi-finals of the competition.

They are one of 21 couples from around the country bidding to take home the choice of a £3,000 cash prize, or a holiday in Antigua.

Hazel Eastman, who runs the Popley Slimming World group every Wednesday at 9.30am, 5.30pm and 7.30pm at Melrose Hall, Abbey Road, said: "Tony and Laura are living proof that slimmers are far more successful when they try to lose weight with a friend or loved one, because they can make changes together, which is often easier."

"It's been a pleasure to watch Tony and Laura slim down - they're a real inspiration to the rest of the group, including me."



• Tony and Laura Sims and (Inset) before their weight loss



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# Efforts continue in fighting floods

**TRUCKS** are continuing to pump water 24 hours a day out of areas of Basingstoke that have been badly affected by flooding.

The rain may have abated for now, but the operations are still very much alive in getting the affected communities in Basingstoke back on their feet.

Buckskin, the worst-hit area, still has portable toilets (near the Ridgeway Centre) and communal bins (Blackdown Close and Grampian Way) in place for the immediate future.

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

The Ridgeway Centre itself continues to be the hub of activity for residents and information.

The county authority have again expressed their commitment to the cause.

Councillor Seán Woodward, Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment at Hampshire County Council, said: "Our aim is to help Hampshire's communities get back on their feet as soon as possible after the storms and flooding."

"Repairing the damage to the highway network and ensuring

businesses are aware of potential support available following government announcements this week are some of the priority areas we will be tackling.

"Meanwhile, we understand that people need to get on with their day-to-day lives, and we want to help them do this as quickly and easily as possible."

"Putting more capacity into the household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) will mean residents can get in and out easily during busy times."

Some residents in Litchfield are on a private water supply, and, at time of print, the borough council was warning that people should assume their water is unsafe to drink from the tap, and

it should be boiled first.

Meanwhile, South East Water have further reassured Buckskin residents about the safety of their water supply, after concerns were expressed about possible contamination of drinking water.

An SE Water statement read: "We have continuous monitoring in place to ensure the water we supply is of the highest quality."

"We understand that there are concerns about flooding and drinking water quality, but our network is self-contained and pressurised, which prevents contamination by flood water."

For the latest on the floods, visit [www.basingstoke.gov.uk](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk) or [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk).

## Man fights off mugger

A BRAVE 37-year-old man was slashed repeatedly with a blade, but successfully fought off a would-be mugger in Tadley.

The mugger brandished the weapon and demanded the victim's phone as he approached him on the green between Herriard Way and Farringdon Way between 7.30pm and 8pm last Tuesday (February 18).

However, the man fought him off, but suffered injuries to his head, hand and stomach.

He was treated at North Hampshire Hospital.

The offender is a white man, of average build and 5ft 10ins tall. His voice indicated he may be in his late teens.

He wore dark trainers with a white stripe from top to sole on the inside of the shoe.

He was also wearing baggy dark coloured trousers, a shell material dark thin top with thumb holes at the bottom of the sleeves.

Call PC David Catchpole at Basingstoke Police Station on 101 if you have any information. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

## Cops: looting reports false

POLICE have said that reports of looting in flood-hit areas of Basingstoke are not true.

Claims were made on social media that people's evacuated houses had been targeted by offenders during the recent floods.

However, a Hampshire Constabulary statement said: "Rumours are rumbling around on social media that properties in the Buckskin area of Basingstoke currently evacuated because of ongoing flooding have been subject to looting over the last couple of days."

"We can reassure all residents this is categorically untrue."

"There have been no incidents of theft, looting, nor any burglary offences. There has been one reported incident of anti-social behaviour caused by youngsters running through water, but no other reported incidents at this time."

"Please rest assured that police are putting on extra patrols in the area to protect all within the community and there are security staff on site 24/7 keeping a close eye on these properties."

## BCoT lecturer Scott nets lifetime achievement gong



• Scott Hayden

BASINGSTOKE College of Technology (BCoT) has awarded Scott Hayden, lecturer in Creative Media Technologies, a lifetime achievement award for services to the College after his article was published on international website Edudemic.com.

In the piece, Scott describes how he implements social media into his teaching and why it is important to embrace new technology in the classroom.

"It's their generation, it's what they use and how they learn," he said. "It is about taking learning to young people and asking them what works best. I embrace new technology; it is fun and engaging and should not be simply ignored."

Scott's teaching methods have recently been praised by Ofsted as 'outstanding'.

Assistant Principal Donna Brown said: "Scott is a huge asset to BCoT - he has contributed greatly to raising the profile of the college and highlighting the new and innovative ways we can develop our teaching."

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**Tadley**  
Ambrose Allen Centre,  
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Tel: Emma 077950 65042

**Oakridge Village**  
Oakridge Hall for All  
Forsythia Walk  
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Tel: Liz 07771 346702

## TUESDAY

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Raven Road  
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Tel: Jo 07515 719190

**Winkiebury**  
Fort Hill Community School  
Kenilworth Road  
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Tel: Tina 07810 147400

**South Ham**  
Westside Community Centre  
Paddock Road  
7.30pm  
Tel: Kirsty 07843 276953

**Overton**  
St Luke's Hall, Winchester Street  
7.30pm  
Tel: Lynn 07885 765341

**Bramley**  
Bramley Village hall, The Street  
7.30pm  
Tel: Kate 07853 989168

## WEDNESDAY

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# Ambulances on two wheels set for Hants

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

A NEW team of first aiders on bicycles is being trained in Basingstoke and across Hampshire in order to swiftly get to people requiring medical attention at large events.

The St John Ambulance Cycle Responders will be on duty at events such as festivals that cover a large area with dense crowds that make it difficult for vehicles to get to a casualty.

Each Cycle Responder rides a mountain bike kitted out with enough equipment to make it effectively a mini ambulance on two wheels.

It's hoped seven new Cycle Responders will be trained up this month, to join the existing team of 10.

South East Regional operational cycling officer Peter Leach said: "We already have a small team of responders, but there aren't enough of them to cover the events for which we receive requests."

"We train them up to the Bikeability level three and also carry out some fitness training including a 1km sprint bike ride followed by a full Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), which is the energetic chest compression needed if someone's heart stops."

"Each bike carries a huge variety of equipment from bandages and aspirin to oxygen and an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) which is also used to restart people's hearts."

Some of the events across the South East at which St John Ambulance Cycle Responders have already been present include the Milton Keynes Marathon, the She Runs Windsor



• St John Ambulance Cycle Responders

10k race, the Blenheim International Horse Trials, Hampshire Youth Games, the London to Brighton British Heart Foundation cycle ride and West Bletchley Council Carnival.

The next major event will be the Brighton Marathon on April 6.

"We are always looking for new volunteers who want to be trained in this role," added Mr Leach.

"People who have a reasonable level of fitness and are already comfortable on a bike, and who would like to learn how to be the difference between a life lost and a life saved, should apply."

Anyone interested in training to be a Cycle Responder should contact Mr Leach on 07747 766554 or email [peter.leach@sja.org.uk](mailto:peter.leach@sja.org.uk).

## Miller welcomes sport government pledge

BASINGSTOKE MP Maria Miller, has welcomed the news that the Prime Minister David Cameron has committed to keeping the £150million a year Primary PE and Sport Premium until 2020.

This means that between 2014

and 2020 primary schools in Basingstoke will receive over £2m.

Maria, who is also Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "Sport is hugely important because it encourages children to be active, lead a healthy lifestyle and, of course,

have fun.

"High quality school sports has enormous benefits - it develops confidence and a sense of achievement, and teaches our children how to rise to a challenge, which will help them succeed in life."

## News Bites

### Not suspicious

A MAN'S body found by a Chineham footbridge is not being treated as suspicious, according to police.

Officers found the body at 1.44am at the first footbridge after Tesco over the A33, close to the Binfields Roundabout.

A file is being prepared for the Hampshire coroner. The man has not been identified.

### Police appeal

POLICE are appealing for witnesses following a burglary in Basingstoke.

Burglars broke into the house on Wellington Terrace in Winklebury between 1.10pm and 1.45pm on Saturday, February 15.

Two gold bracelets were stolen, and anyone with information should contact PC David Catchpole on 101.

### Cleaning up

A GRAFFITI cleaning blitz will take place on the streets in Hart district between March 10 and 14.

Graffiti Focus Week will see graffiti removal contractors and teams from Rushmoor and Hart on a mission to remove as much graffiti from the area as possible.

Providing the landowner grants their permission, graffiti on private property will also be removed.

Caroline Ryan, Safer North Hampshire community safety manager, said: "This initiative will help to ensure that graffiti is removed even quicker than normal and will help to provide a sense of pride and ownership of the places where people live and work."

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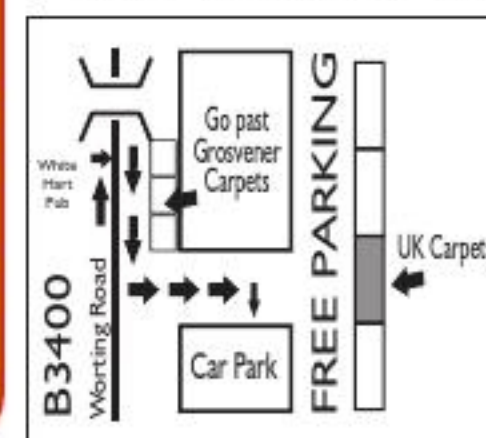


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# Festival to be bigger than ever this year

BASINGSTOKE'S annual festival is on track to be bigger than ever this year, with registrations at their highest level since the event's inception.

From June 20 until July 13, the borough will be awash with colour, creativity and culture as Basingstoke Festival returns for a third time.

More than 20 people have already enquired with two weeks left to register different events, the busiest period normally being the run-up until deadline day on March 14, two weeks tomorrow.

The three-week extravaganza is shaping up to be a spectacular line-up of events and activities to suit all.

As in previous years, the festival aims to showcase the wealth of Basingstoke and Deane's cultural talent and community spirit through a colourful contrast of entertainment and activities.

Among the acts to be confirmed for the festival so far are Shakespeare at Bartons Mill, the Walled Garden and the Haymarket, World Party at Eastrop Park, Flashdance at the Anvil, fun-filled entertainment and activities at The Malls, Festival Place and the Top of the Town and of course the finale event Basingstoke Live in War Memorial Park.

And a new twist to festive pro-

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

ceedings will see the opening weekend display short extracts of what residents and visitors to the borough can look forward to throughout the festival.

Cllr Cathy Osselton, cabinet member responsible for the festival, said: "This is a very exciting time as the events start to roll in to the festival office and we can see the programme take shape."

"It's not too late to register for the festival and we want to hear from a wide variety of performers, organisations, artists and venues, so please get in touch."

To keep up to date with the latest Basingstoke Festival information and programme announcements, see the Basingstoke Festival website [www.basingstokefestival.co.uk](http://www.basingstokefestival.co.uk), Facebook at [www.facebook.com/basingstokefestival](https://www.facebook.com/basingstokefestival) or Twitter @BstokeFestival.

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Contact the Newsdesk on

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## Spotlight on youngsters ahead of London



A GROUP of talented Basingstoke students are set to take their interpretation of a modern play to London in a few weeks' time.

Children's charity Spotlight UK performed Heritage by award-winning writer, composer and performer Dafydd James at the town's Central Studio Theatre on Saturday.

Their interpretation of a piece of work described as 'a blistering black comedy with music

that explores the darker side of nationalism' has been met with critical acclaim.

The group will now venture to their partner theatre, The Bush Theatre in Shepherd's Bush, London in April.

Saturday's performance was part of National Theatre Connections - a nationwide celebration of new plays for young people.

Each year 10 new plays are commissioned for and about

young people from some of the best contemporary playwrights, for performance by schools and youth theatres all over the UK and Ireland, making Connections one of the world's largest celebration of youth theatre.

Spotlight UK, based in Shakespeare Road, Popley, is committed to giving everyone the chance to express themselves who wants to do so, regardless of the background, history or culture.

## Frustrated at changes to buses

A BASINGSTOKE councillor has called on Stagecoach to rethink their new routes implemented around the town earlier this month.

Terri Reid, ward member for Hatch Warren and Beggarwood, said more vulnerable people in the area were being affected as a result of the revamped routes.

Earlier this month, the Observer reported on similar problems being suffered in Oakley and Brighton Hill.

Stagecoach admitted they would look at future consultations, but felt they had done the best they possibly could when faced with making the bus routes around the town more financially viable.

And the company have already said they did not take measures to consult further with the public, as they did not want to run the risk of causing fear among residents when no plans had been made permanent.

However, Cllr Reid said: "There's a lot of different changes that have all happened at once."

"It's affecting those people who are most dependent on public transport - the elderly, mums with children and students. What I would like to ask Stagecoach to look at is go back to the previous timetable and then do a proper consultation."

"And then if they want to implement some changes, at least they've done it by consulting properly with their customers, who I think are getting a raw deal at the moment."

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# Gang show a great success



**BASINGSTOKE** Gang Show came to a triumphant end on Saturday night after eight days of entertainment.

The show began in 1980, and is now held once every two years at Basingstoke's Haymarket Theatre.

Around 70 scouts and guides come together for the eight days of entertainment – the 21st gang show since its inception.

The show's producer, Julie Allen,

**By James Booker**

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

said: "It went really well – we had a lovely audience in on Saturday night. It's been a good couple of weeks."

"We had a few issues with space backstage, because it changes every time we go in there, so we had to make a few adaptations, and carry a few trolleys up and down stairs, but it worked really well."

Ms Allen added her favourite part of the extravaganza was the friendships struck up by its young stars.

"On the last night – seeing the children bond together. They are like a family anyway, but the last night saw a few of them crying."

"You know they're all going to miss each other, you know it's the last time they're going to get to perform this show. Just knowing they've built friendships."

This year's show cost £50,000 to stage, was entirely self-funded and relied on the dedication and commitment of a team of 11 volunteers.

In 1984, the show was awarded the coveted Red Scarf and Gang Show emblem, which acknowledged the consistently high standard of the performance.



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• All pictures by Alex Webster

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# Police: We'll stamp out the area's rural offences

A SENIOR Hampshire police officer has pledged to keep up the force's focus on cracking down on rural crime.

Three men appeared at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court earlier this month after admitting poaching offences.

Henry Woolford, 19, and William Read, 38, were each fined £2,500 after daytime poaching in Longparish in September.

In a separate incident, Edward Goddard, 18, was fined £305 for night poaching in Bramdean on December 12, while a 20-year-old Southampton man was cautioned for his role in the offence.

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

And a Winchester man, 58-year-old Thomas Eastwood, was jailed for 10 months for handling stolen goods.

Chief Inspector Simon Dodds, strategic lead for rural policing, said: "These successful results are further examples of how the police and local community are working together to reduce incidents of crime in rural areas and make Hampshire and the Isle of Wight a

hostile place for criminals.

"We are working hard with the courts to secure the maximum penalties that we can because we need the punishment to act as a significant deterrent to these offenders.

"In all of these incidents, we have used information provided to us by members of the public to help build our cases against these individuals to put them

before the courts.

"These results show how vital that information is. Reports of suspicious activity or sightings of vehicles where they shouldn't be allow us to build a case against those who are intent on coming here to commit crime.

"There can sometimes be a perception that because action isn't seen to be taken at the time, that nothing is happening.

"I hope these results show our rural communities that we are listening, we do take action and we are committed to tackling, disrupting and ultimately preventing criminal activity across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight."

Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner Judy Venables said: "This is another successful outcome that highlights the

value of Hampshire Constabulary bringing these cases to court.

"We are committed to ensuring that rural crimes are effectively prosecuted.

"This continues to send out a strong message to those who might consider committing such crimes in Hampshire or the Isle of Wight, that they will be pursued and prosecuted."

## Animals back from extinction in Lego form



MILESTONES Museum started its Lego Lost World Zoo exhibition yesterday.

Until April 27, visitors can come face to face with a LEGO sabre toothed tiger, find the flock of LEGO dodos, and discover the giant dragonflies and butterflies.

HCC's executive member for Culture and Recreation, Coun-

cillor Keith Chapman, said: "Last year's Lego Mania event was a huge success and for the 2014 event, there are some great activities planned.

"I hope many people will visit, take part and have fun."

For information, you can go online and visit [www.milestones-museum.com](http://www.milestones-museum.com).

## Volunteers and charity set to be honoured in High Sheriff Awards

TWO volunteers and a charity that helps blind people, all from Basingstoke, will receive High Sheriff of Hampshire Community Awards at a ceremony on Saturday.

The charity is Living Paintings, a Kingsclere organisation providing free books for blind or partially blind adults and children.

The two volunteer individuals are Headley's Barrie Hiscock, a longstanding football referee and local football organiser, and Paul Temple, who has been a leading figure in the Basingstoke Gymnastics Club for over thirty years.

Rupert Younger, High Sher-

iff of Hampshire, said: "I am very grateful to Councillor Keith Chapman, Basingstoke area panel chair for the Hampshire High Sheriff Community Awards, for all his hard work in researching and nominating these award winners.

"I am inspired and humbled by the dedication, commitment and sheer dogged determination of each of the recipients.

"I look forward to congratulating them formally at the High Sheriff of Hampshire Awards Celebration this Saturday where they will have the chance to meet and share their experiences with other winners from around Hampshire."

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# Thumbs-up from patients!

## BGT star Steve set for charity day

BRITAIN'S Got Talent ventriloquist Steve Hewlett will make a special guest appearance at a charity day in Basingstoke next month.

A joint family fun afternoon fundraiser is being held at Popley Fields Community Centre on March 9, to benefit Basingstoke Young Carers and Helping Hands for the Blind.

David Chatten Smith, who has been blind for eight years after suffering from meningitis, is the chairperson of Helping Hands for the Blind.

"We are very lucky to have Steve do this event for us with his very busy schedule," he said.

"We know that it is going to be a great family fun afternoon with lots to do and see, and we could not have done this event without the help of all of our volunteers and the local businesses that have kindly donated their services and time.

"We are all very excited."

As well as Steve's show, there will also be a range of further activities for families to enjoy - for more information, visit [www.helpinghands-fortheblind.org.uk](http://www.helpinghands-fortheblind.org.uk) or call Basingstoke Young Carers on 01256 423851.

Doors open at 12.30pm, tickets from £5.

PATIENTS of BMI Hampshire Clinic in Basingstoke have given the hospital an overall satisfaction score of 96.8 per cent in the annual patient survey.

This means that patients rated overall quality of care as either excellent or very good.

The independent survey, conducted and analysed by market research company Quality Health, was carried out during the entire of 2013.

The poll asked around 1,500 patients to rate the services and quality of care they receive.

The survey measured patient satisfaction across a broad range of criteria, including patients' overall impression of admission, consultant care, imaging (X-ray)

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

anaesthetists, theatre staff, accommodation and whether patients were treated with respect and dignity.

And overall impression of consultant surgeons or physicians received an impressive 98.8 per cent approval.

The Old Basing-based clinic employs 200 people and works with 125 consultants.

Bruce Robinson, executive director at BMI Hampshire Clinic, said: "We are delighted that our patients have rated us so highly.

"The team here at BMI Hampshire Clinic are very dedicated to providing our patients with high standards of care, and the survey shows our patients are particularly appreciative of their efforts.

"We are all very proud of our hospital; everyone here goes above and beyond to ensure our patients are our priority, working hard to make each patient's time with us as comfortable as possible."

"The annual patient survey is an invaluable insight and an important indicator of how well we look after the people who choose us to deliver their healthcare.

"We monitor the results very closely and always look for ways to improve what we do.

"Today's result is something to be really proud of and our aim will be to continue to ensure we provide the very best in patient care."



• BMI Hampshire Clinic on Old Basing

## Children's charity gets £10k funding boost

A BASINGSTOKE children's charity has received a £10,000 grant to help pay for a support worker.

Santander has given the money to Sebastian's Action Trust in order to pay for a financial support officer.

This role will help assist families of seriously ill children who are struggling to cope with finances as a result of their plight.

Jane Gates, CEO of Sebastian's Action Trust, said: "We are delighted that the Santander Foundation has chosen to support us.

"On a daily basis families tell us how difficult it is to manage their child's illness against the demands of their family finances.

"This role will help them to navigate the system and to access support which they may not have even known they were entitled to."

Sally Brooks, branch manager at Santander's Camberley branch said: "The Santander Foundation makes hundreds of donations every year to good causes throughout the UK to support disadvantaged people through education and training projects.

"We are pleased to be able to help Sebastian's Action Trust develop and increase their service to the benefit of our local community."

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## County is a 'Region of the Future'

HAMPSHIRE is a 'Region of the Future', after an international study has found it to be one of the most promising investment locations in Europe.

The county has been praised for having particular strengths in terms of 'business friendliness' and 'Foreign Direct Investment Strategy' in the annual fDi European Cities and Regions of the Future 2014/15 rankings.

"We are delighted to see Hampshire recognised as both a region with a clear strategy for attracting and retaining inward investment, and at the same time being business friendly," said Councillor Sean Woodward, executive member for Economy, Transport & Environment at Hampshire County Council.

"Invest in Hampshire is one of our initiatives which positions Hampshire as a leading location for business, supporting key employers while helping create more jobs locally.

"Through our Invest in Hampshire and Visit Hampshire activities, we will continue to ensure that Hampshire remains a prosperous county, and at the same time retains its superb environment and quality of life."

For more information please visit [www.investinhampshire.co.uk](http://www.investinhampshire.co.uk).

Find us on Twitter  
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# New service to help with speech issues

**YOUNGSTERS** in Basingstoke and across Hampshire who suffer from speech problems are set to receive a boost with the introduction of a new therapy service.

The new service is commissioned by clinical commissioning groups across Hampshire, and will be provided by Solent NHS Trust.

It is estimated the service will be in place by the summer.

Dr Amanda Britton, children and maternity clinical lead for NHS North Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: "We want to help parents and carers to manage the care of their child, helping them to remain the 'expert' - the constant - in their ongoing care."

"This new service means that there is one place to go for timely support, intervention and advice for those aged 0-19 years with physical, occupational and speech and language difficulties."

"Bringing together these services, and the organisations involved in commissioning and providing them, will improve health outcomes for children, young people and their families thanks to an integrated approach across health, social care and education."

"There will be a single point

of access, and people can self-refer. Applications are sorted following referral in order to determine the best way to meet patients' needs - cutting red tape and ensuring patients can access the right service at the right time."

Pippa Cook, therapy services manager at Solent NHS Trust, said: "As an experienced provider of these services we are delighted to have been chosen to provide equitable, high quality integrated paediatric therapy services across Hampshire."

"We are looking forward to working with children and young people and their families to ensure that they are able to access care and treatment that enables them to achieve the health outcomes that matter most to them."

Councillor Keith Mans, Hampshire County Council lead member for Children's Services and deputy leader, said: "This contract is an important development as it should help to ensure that children in need of therapies can receive a more consistent and co-ordinated service."

By James Booker

[news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk](mailto:news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk)

## Jewellery stolen from house in Tadley

SEVERAL valuable items of jewellery have been stolen from a house in Tadley, including the watch in the picture.

The timepiece, worth £295, is a silver topical time Jean Pierre half hunter skeleton fob watch. Burglars struck at the house

in Crescent Road sometime between January 24 and February 2.

Other items that were stolen were:

- A grooved, two-colour gold men's ring, with a square top and a single diamond in one

corner.

- A gold watch with a heart shaped face and a flat interlocking strap.

- A gold ladies ring with a V-shaped top with small blue and white alternate stones.

- A square topped ladies ring with large stones, with two smaller stones either side in gold.

- A dark blue drawstring bag, with possibly 'Hanor Unite' on it in red.

Anyone who saw anything suspicious should contact 101.

Police are also keen to hear from anyone who may have been offered items matching these descriptions for sale.



• The silver topical time Jean Pierre half hunter watch

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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Highfield Park



# Entertainment

Welcome to our Entertainments page where we are showcasing all that is good in local entertainment ranging from professional to amateur acts. If you would like your event considered for publication please contact reporter Adam Flinn at [adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk](mailto:adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk) or telephone 01235 516933

## Chapman uncovered

### Charity night

WEYBROOK Golf Club is hosting a charity night tomorrow to raise money for Saxon Wood School, with live music provided by The Trends.

The school helps children with learning difficulties, and is the golf club's nominated charity for the year.

Tickets cost £5, and doors open at 7pm. Contact the club on 01256 320347 for more information.

### A New Play

CHILDREN'S favourites Charlie and Lola bring their 'Extremely New Play' to The Haymarket stage over the weekend, with a magical journey through the seasons.

This brand new show follows on from the previous Charlie and Lola production 'Bestest Play', with this show featuring Sizzles the dog.

Two shows are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, at 11am and 1.30pm. Go to [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk) for further details.

AMERICAN singer songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman comes to Basingstoke on Saturday, following the release of her latest album 'UnCovered'.

Beth's newest release sees a batch of premium songs she's written for other artists, seven of which have gone on to be number ones.

It was broadcasting legend Bob Harris who suggested compiling the album from songs that Beth was putting together for an upcoming box set.

"I was so grateful to be talking to him," said Beth. "It's been a fantastic idea that's allowed me much more time to do the box set, so thank you Bob!"

Talking about the guest artists that feature on the album, Beth said: "Some of them I already knew, and a lot of it was pretty organic, just thinking who would be really good on each song."

"One was Duane Eddy, who played on a song I wrote with Waylon Jennings called 'Sweet

By Adam Flinn

[adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk](mailto:adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk)

Love Shine'.

"I happened to be sitting next to him at a dinner, and was talking to him about making this record, and it went really well."

"I asked if he would consider playing on the record and he said 'absolutely, I'd love to', so that was a thrill having Duane Eddy coming over and bringing his amp and playing guitar in my studio. That was amazing."

As well as 'UnCovered', Beth has also been working on some more unusual projects in recent years, including her children's album 'The Mighty Sky', which is all about astronomy.

Beth added: "I do these projects that are kind of off the grid every once in a while."

"It's something we've been taking to schools about and working with NASA, and it's been a real interesting journey."

Beth plays at The Anvil on Saturday from 7.45pm, and tickets cost £24.50. For more information, go to [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk) or call 01256 844244.



• Beth Nielsen Chapman comes to The Anvil this weekend

### Lonely soldier

WOYZECK, the story of a lowly soldier plunged into homicidal lunacy by the world around him during the First World War, is staged at Central Studio tomorrow evening.

The production fuses gothic storytelling, puppetry and song in this brand new adaptation of Georg Buchner's play.

It starts at 7.30pm, and booking details can be found at [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk).

### Make a Killing

A NEW comedy about best friends Raza and Gurjit comes to the Proteus Creation Space this evening, in 'How to Make a Killing in Bollywood'.

The pair decide to quit their jobs in a takeaway restaurant and head to India to pursue their Bollywood dream, but it doesn't go to plan and their friendship is tested to the limit.

The show begins at 7.30. Go to [www.proteustheatre.com](http://www.proteustheatre.com) for more information.

### Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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# Entertainment

Welcome to our Entertainments page where we are showcasing all that is good in local entertainment ranging from professional to amateur acts. If you would like your event considered for publication please contact reporter Adam Flinn at [adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk](mailto:adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk) or telephone 01235 516933

## From Downton to the Anvil

### Robins: Where is my mind?

STAND-UP comedian John Robins comes to The Forge this evening, with his show from last year's Edinburgh Festival 'Where Is My Mind'.

John's career started in Bristol when he shared a house with fellow comedians Russell Howard, Jon Richardson and Mark Oliver, who helped him set up his first gigs.

This was key in helping John launch his career, in what ended up becoming known as the 'Bristol comedy flat'.

"I started in 2005, when I went down to my local open mic night," said John. "There I met Russell, Mark and Jon."

"Russell had been going a few years, the other two had just started round in Bristol doing the open mic circuit, and so I would go every Sunday to Bristol or Cardiff."

"And then I ended up getting a flat with Russell, Jon and Mark in 2007, so through those friendships was really how things kicked off."

"I've not done Basingstoke for quite a while, so I'm looking forward to coming there."



• John Robins comes to The Forge tonight

Tickets for tonight's show cost £11, and the show starts at 8pm. For more details, go to [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk) or call the box office on 01256 844244.

By Adam Flinn

[adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk](mailto:adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk)

SADIE and the Hotheads, featuring lead singer and American actress Elizabeth McGovern, perform alongside Mike and the Mechanics at The Anvil next Thursday.

Elizabeth is known in the UK for playing Cora, Countess of Grantham in the ITV drama series Downton Abbey, and began fronting the band in 2008.

And the group, comprised of Elizabeth, Steve Nelson, Simon Nelson, Teri Bryant, Ron Knights, Nick Lacey and Danica Chapman, released their new album 'Still Waiting' earlier this month.

Backing vocalist Danica said: "We're getting lots of positive feedback to the album."

"The video is out as well for the single, which is called 'Everybody's Got A Song to Sing'."

"We're doing a half-hour slot at The Anvil, so we'll do about six songs. Three of them are from the new album, and I think three from the second."

The group started when Elizabeth began taking guitar lessons



• Sadie and the Hotheads support Mike and the Mechanics at The Anvil next Thursday

from musician Steve Nelson, which eventually grew into song-writing sessions before deciding to record the material.

Steve said: "About 12 years ago I started teaching Elizabeth the guitar, and at that stage it was very much a part-time, fun project really, and now this new album is actually the third album we've made."

"It's been ongoing for a while but it didn't really take off until Elizabeth's profile went up with Downton Abbey, which in turn has helped the band."

As well as playing alongside Mike and the Mechanics, Sadie and the Hotheads have collaborated with a wide range of popular musicians, including Joss Stone, Beverley Knight and Ms

Dynamite.

While the group are still focusing on promoting the new album, they are already planning festival appearances over the summer, and a possible trip to Australia to perform there.

Further details about next Thursday's show can be found at [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk), or by calling 01256 844244.

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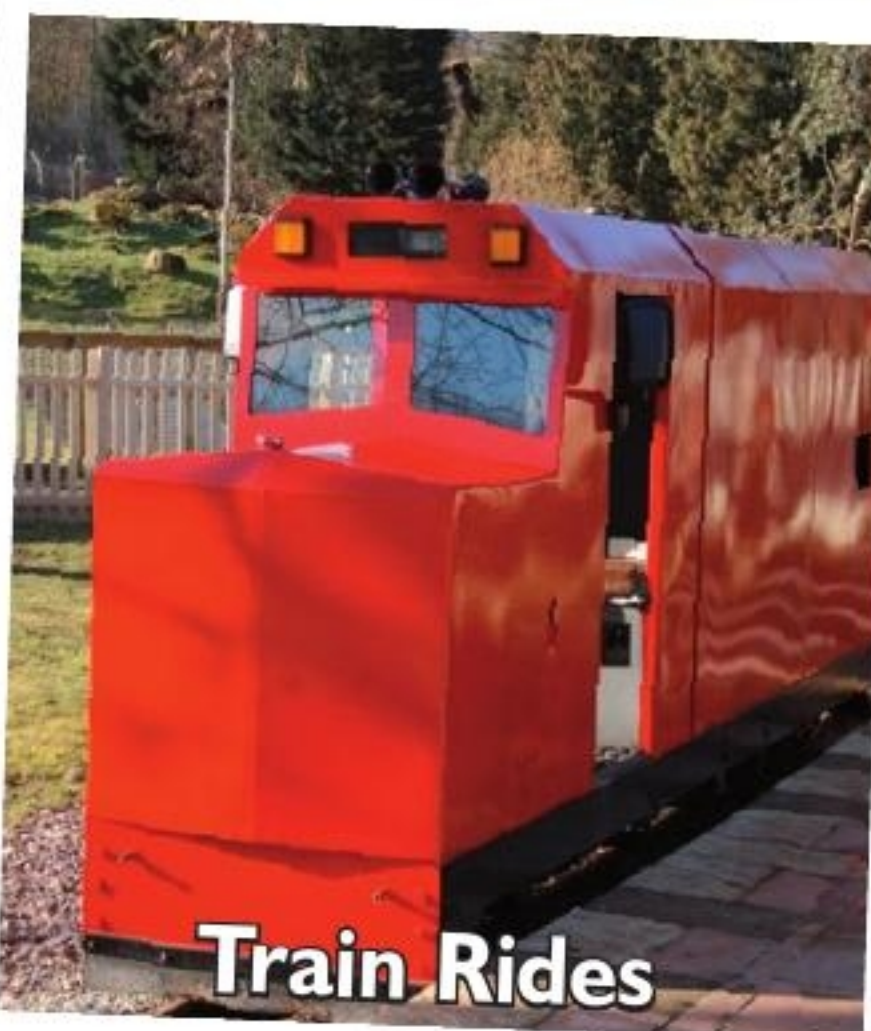
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## Sudoku

Place a number from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each 3x3 block, column, and full row includes each of the numbers from 1 to 9 only once. **EASY/MEDIUM/HARD**

	7			4		9		6
				5	1	4	2	
8	5					7		3
9			6			8		
6	2		5		4		7	9
		3			2			1
2		1					8	5
	6	7	1	8				
4		9		6				3

	3	4		7		9	1	
1	6						8	5
4			3		7			6
	5						3	
7			8		5			9
3	7						2	1
	4	8		9		6	7	

1		2			4			
6	5				8		3	
				2		1		5
			3				4	8
5	4					2		
3		8		5				
	1		9				6	3
			7			8		9

## Two speed crossword

### Quick Clues Across

- 1 Understands (11)
- 9 Polish by friction (3)
- 10 Outer boundary (9)
- 11 Praise (5)
- 13 Small ship (7)
- 14 Latin poet (6)
- 16 One who prepares work for publication (6)
- 18 Loudly (7)
- 19 Sensational (5)
- 20 Trying to equal (9)
- 21 Sticky brown liquid from coal (3)
- 22 Delight (11)

### Quick Clues Down

- 2 Sphere (3)
- 3 Scholar (5)
- 4 Continent (6)
- 5 Clad in white fur (7)
- 6 One who belittles (9)
- 7 One who rejects religious authority (11)
- 8 Those who do not believe in protective tariffs (11)
- 12 Baseness (9)
- 15 Weather (7)
- 17 One who operates a typewriter (6)
- 19 Not heavy (5)
- 21 Also (3)

### Cryptic Clues Across

- 1 Knock out empty cone for spare change (6,5)
- 9 Are making an organ (3)
- 10 Kit is somehow anti a religious follower (9)
- 11 Halts nearly a mile back for an afterthought (5)
- 13 Refer it to the conebearer (3,4)
- 14 Rest round centrally full effect (6)
- 16 Is the gambler superior? (6)
- 18 Sticky to let care run riot (7)
- 19 Move sideways, and support about fifty (5)
- 20 Unpleasant assault (9)
- 21 Part of the Bible for a worker (3)
- 22 A friend consuming the sea bird ate every other (11)

### Cryptic Clues Down

- 2 Possibly stroke the blade (3)
- 3 Thrilling boots? (5)
- 4 Duty to quarrel about the rising sun god (6)
- 5 See nothing second-class to present (7)
- 6 For example, I'm back inside, told off for having gone abroad (9)
- 7 Last month on a trial about the announcement (11)
- 8 Final hearing for men up the street to make pretty speeches (11)
- 12 Domineering, but in reverse frets with an external maul (9)
- 15 Permission to abuse freedom (7)
- 17 Many is the stage I take on (6)
- 19 Exhausted - through writing in the street? (5)
- 21 Every part of the ballet (3)

	1	2		3		4		5		6		
7												8
9				10								
11		12				13						
14				15			16					
						17						
18								19				
20											21	
22												

## Scribble space

## Last week's solutions

7	8	3	6	5	1	9	2	4
5	9	6	8	2	4	1	3	7
4	1	2	9	7	3	8	5	6
2	5	8	3	6	9	7	4	1
6	7	4	5	1	8	3	9	2
1	3	9	7	4	2	6	8	5
8	2	1	4	9	7	5	6	3
3	6	7	2	8	5	4	1	9
9	4	5	1	3	6	2	7	8

4	9	2	6	1	7	5	8	3
1	5	3	4	8	2	9	6	7
8	6	7	9	5	3	1	2	4
2	8	9	5	3	1	7	4	6
7	3	1	8	6	4	2	5	9
5	4	6	2	7	9	3	1	8
9	1	8	3	4	5	6	7	2
6	2	5	7	9	8	4	3	1
3	7	4	1	2	6	8	9	5

8	7	9	2	5	4	6	3	1
6	5	4	8	1	3	9	7	2
1	2	3	9	7	6	5	4	8
4	6	1	3	8	9	7	2	5
7	9	8	5	4	2	1	6	3
2	3	5	7	6	1	8	9	4
9	1	2	6	3	8	4	5	7
3	4	7	1	9	5	2	8	6
5	8	6	4	2	7	3	1	9

### Quick Crossword

Across: 1 Backache 4 Band 8 Minute 10 Spites 11 Unite 12 Slang 14 Oracle 17 Sleepwalk 18 Shadowing 22 Estate 23 Anger 24 Trays 26 Mantis 27 String 28 Nest 29 Ballasts

Down: 1 Bump 2 Canals 3 Attune 5 Attack 6 Desserts 7 Opera 9 Engenders 10 Stowaways 13 Alpha 15 Along 16 Waterman 18 Stands 19 Attic 20 Instil 21 Genius 25 Ages

### Cryptic Crossword

Across: 1 Camisole 4 Acre 8 Maniac 10 Cellos 11 Cheap 12 Hosea 14 Romney 17 Red setter 18 Allegoric 22 Person 23 Rears 24 Least 26 Shield 27 Earned 28 Date 29 Spinners  
Down: 1 Camp 2 Mentor 3 Spaced 5 Collar 6 Essayist 7 Depot 9 Chastened 10 Cart-horse 13 Seals 15 Media 16 Composed 18 Artist 19 Lolls 20 Retain 21 Gringe 25 Odes

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## 28 February, 7:30pm Central Studio Queen Mary's College WOYZECK

Set amidst the backdrop of WW1, a startling depiction of the lowly soldier plagued by visions of the apocalypse and plunged into homicidal lunacy by the world around him. Fusing gothic storytelling, puppetry, song and a spine chilling sound track, this brand new adaptation based on the play by Georg Buchner takes the audience into a world that is disturbingly atmospheric, heart breakingly poignant, darkly comic and delightfully interactive. Tickets: £10.50 full | £9.50 concessions | £6.00 students & children [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk)

## 1 March The Tea Bar, Basingstoke IT'S A VINYL THING

Old School Tunes played the Old School way, you can't beat the crackle and pop of retro vinyl.

## 1 March, 11am Central Studio, Queen Mary's College A BIRD IN YOUR EAR

Snail Tails' thoroughly original and highly participatory production that's sometimes moral, sometimes delightfully absurd, but always colourful, curious and fun. Tickets: £6 full | £5 children [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk)

## 1 March, 7:30pm Central Studio Queen Mary's College THE TABLE

Moses is a cantankerous 2 foot high puppet, with a cardboard head, who lives on a table. And he's got a problem. All he ever gets asked to perform is fairy tales or children's birthday parties, and he's fed up with it. He's an artist! He's a serious puppet! So tonight, for one show only, the table is his and he is going to perform an epic story. Tickets £12 full | £10 concessions | £8.00 students and children. [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk) 01256 418318

## 1 March, 7:45pm The Anvil BETH NIELSEN CHAPMAN

£24.50 (includes £1 booking fee) 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 1 March, 5pm Famham Maltings Association. THE MET: LIVE IN HD BORODIN: PRINCE IGOR

This new production, marking director Dmitri Tcherniakov's Met debut, is a new version constructed by him in collaboration with conductor Gianandrea Noseda and taken from all of Borodin's known music and orchestrations. <http://Metopera.org/uk>

## 1 March - 2 March The Haymarket CHARLIE AND LOLA'S EXTREMELY NEW PLAY

Saturday 11am, 1.30pm and 4pm. Sunday 11am and 1.30pm. Charlie and Lola are completely excited to be back on stage and this time they're bringing along Sizzles the Dog! £13 (includes £1 booking fee) 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 1 March, 6pm - 9pm Popley, Basingstoke FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT

Family Quiz Night. Saturday 1st March. Popley Spotlight Centre in Popley, Basingstoke. 6pm to 9pm. Raffle too, can you donate any prizes? Book a table now 01256325420 £6 a table. Tel 01256 325420

## 1 March, 8:00pm Moose Centre, Churchill Way, GILES HEDLEY AND THE AVIATORS

The Club welcomes Giles and the Aviators, with his great voice and lead guitar, dazzling harmonica, bottleneck & lap steel guitars. Giles is a mainstay of the British blues scene. Tickets and details, Rex on: (01256) 321837 Mobile: 07979 422590 or Ted on: (01256) 324313 email via website: [www.basingstokebluesclub.co.uk](http://www.basingstokebluesclub.co.uk)

## 5 March, 7:45pm The Anvil VIENNA TONKÜNSTLER ORCHESTRA

The evening begins with Kodály's Dances of Galánta. The composer was an indefatigable collector of folk songs and dances from all over Eastern Europe. His sequence of dances from the region of Galánta in present day Slovakia is colourful and beautifully orchestrated. 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 6 March, 7:30 Central Studio Queen Mary's College A NOVEMBER DAY

In forgotten boxes in an attic, a woman discovers the story of her grandfather, a survivor of the First World War, and his unexpected encounter with a stray dog who knew no boundaries. With evocative puppet characters, live music and an ever-changing set, Thingumajig Theatre presents a timeless fable on war and the miracle of friendship when all else seems lost. [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk)

## 7 March, from 8:00pm The Tea Bar, Basingstoke JAZZ NIGHT

with the fantastic Andy Kennedy Jazz Quartet

## 7 March, 7:30 Central Studio Queen Mary's College ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT

FREE. Come along to play at Central Studio, or just come to hear some of the most talented musicians in Basingstoke. Everybody welcome, from professionals to first time performers. Do you want to perform? Email paul.philipson@qmc.ac.uk in advance.

## 7 March - 8 March The Anvil THE MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS

Superstar clowns Pavlik and Klava invite the audience to a wondrous and mysterious place. As the loveable buffoons reminisce about past times in one of the most famous cities on earth they are surrounded by a multitude of flying, back flipping, juggling and roller skating performers. 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 8 March The Tea Bar, Basingstoke ACOUSTIC LIVE WITH RYAN SAUNDERS

A very talented young man, listen out for his Elvis acoustic set.

## 8 March, 7:30pm The Forge MAWKIN

Forged out of the electric partnership of brothers Jamie and David Delarre, Mawkin are a concoction of brilliantly inventive musicianship and uninhibited exuberance. 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 9 March, 7:30pm The Anvil THE TENORS

The music of Clifton Murray, Victor Micallef, Remigio Pereira and Fraser Walters is rich and soulful with powerful anthems and beautiful melodies, sung not only in English and French, but also in Spanish and Italian, reflecting their multicultural heritage.

01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 12 March, 7:30pm The Haymarket EMILY: THE MAKING OF A MILITANT SUFFRAGETTE

Emily Wilding Davison was an extraordinary woman pushed to extraordinary deeds. She died under the galloping hooves of King George's Derby horse in 1913. She was campaigning for what she believed in. This is the story of all her life and the events that led to her untimely end. 01256 844244 [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)

## 14 March, from 8:00pm The Tea Bar, Basingstoke LIVE LOUNGE ACOUSTIC SESSION

with the very talented Rob Hayes and Guests

## 14 March, 7:30pm Central Studio Queen Mary's College THINGUMAJIG THEATRE PRESENTS A NOVEMBER DAY

a tale about two men, a dog and a war between them. Marking the centenary of the First World War, this play explores the timely question of how we remember. [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk) 01256 418318

## 15 March, from 8:00pm The Tea Bar, Basingstoke CONNIE DEADMAN

performing live acoustic throughout the evening

## 15 March, 11:00am Central Studio Queen Mary's College THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

Be a spectator at the race between The Hare & The Tortoise, choose your champ, make your puppet supporter and watch this nail biting contest! Everyone is preparing for the Anniolympics...You, Lieutenant Fox-Fowler - and champions of the day - Harry Hare and Les the Tortoise! Supporters gather from all corners of the terrain - but who will take home the Golden Medallion? The clock is ticking. The race is preceded by an activity workshop in which in which each family or group makes an animal puppet to support their champion and join in the run up events! All you need is newspaper, imagination and a bit of masking tape. Suitable for accompanied children from 4 upwards and anyone with a sense of fun. £6.00 full | £5.00 children [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk)

## 16 March The Raven Hotel, Hook PSYCHIC FAYRE

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## 18-20 March, 11:00am & 1:00pm daily Central Studio Queen Mary's College TUNNELS

£10 and companions go free. Join Lana on an exciting adventure as she searches for the light that has mysteriously disappeared from her city. An enchanting multi-sensory production that fuses live music, sign and movement; Tunnels is a unique adventure for teenagers with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. If you would like to make a group booking please call the Box Office. Please note that Tunnels is for an audience of six 13-19 year olds with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) and their companions. [www.centralstudio.co.uk](http://www.centralstudio.co.uk)

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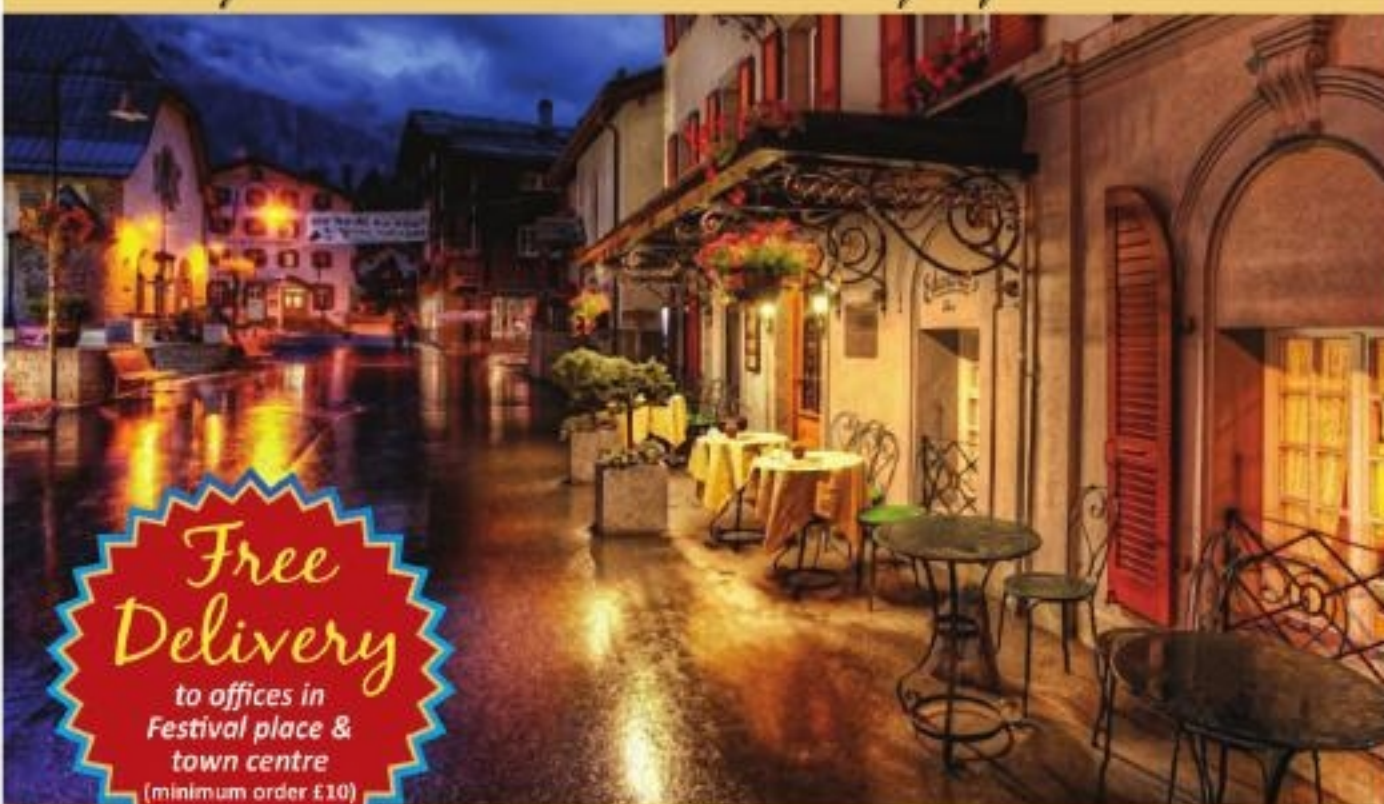
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EDSEL Records are doing their best to bring back the heady days of Britpop with their ongoing releases of classic back catalogues.

Strictly in alphabetical order we have deluxe and remastered, 2CD+DVD\* editions of the four original albums from 90's Merseyside four piece, Cast.

Undoubtedly the definitive editions of the band's catalogue, each release will come with original artwork, high-quality new packaging, exclusive bonus audio, extra tracks plus new sleeve notes. These superb packages will also include new interviews with Cast frontman John Power.

Labelled 'The Who of the 90's', Noel Gallagher once described watching Cast play live as "a religious experience." Formed in 1992 from the ashes of two of the most lauded guitar bands of recent times - The La's and

Closing date:  
Friday, March 14

Shack, Cast released four albums between 1995 and 2001.

Their debut album, 'All Change' (1995), a delightful slice of scouse psychedelic pop, was released on Polydor Records at the height of the Britpop movement, and became the highest selling album for the label, selling over one million copies and spawned four Top 20 hit singles.

Next up is London based Gene. The CDs available here include 'Olympian', 'To See The Lights', 'Revelations', 'Drawn To The Deep End' and 'Libertine'. Presented in 2CD casebound editions, and featuring a host of bonus tracks, rarities, and featuring contributions from the band, these are the defini-

tive re-issues of the bands much loved catalogue.

Gene were formed in London in 1993 by singer Martin Rossiter, guitarist Steve Mason, bassist Kevin Miles and drummer Matt James, Mason and James having previously played together in Sp'n. Inspired by the songs of The Smiths, The Jam and The Faces, Rossiter's literate vocals and Mason's fluid guitar lines were perfectly complemented by the intuitive rhythm section of Miles and James. All in all this is a massive release of some serious classics and we have a complete set of each to give away. All you have to do is answer the following question:

**Q: WHO WAS THE GUITARIST IN GENE?**



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## New Honda Civic Tourer 'will handle everything you throw at it'

# An excellent family car

**SOME things never change, and plenty of people like it that way. The question I'm pondering is whether you can or cannot apply that reasoning to the new Honda Civic Tourer.**

The Civic has a duality to its reputation that no other car can quite match. On one hand, you have the boy racer's favourite, with screaming VTEC petrol engines and pin-sharp chassis dynamics. On the other hand, you have the safe, anonymous and imperiously reliable hatchback popular with the elderly.

But this new Civic Tourer aims to

### Facts at a glance

Model: Honda Civic 1.8 i-VTEC SR Tourer, £24,350

Engine: 1.8-litre four-cylinder producing 140bhp and 128lb.ft

Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox driving the front wheels

Performance: Top speed 130mph, 0-62mph in 9.2 seconds

Fuel economy: 44.3mpg  
CO2 rating: 146g/km

REVIEW: HONDA CIVIC TOURER  
By **Matt Kimberley**

end both stigmas once and for all by putting young families directly in its sights. Honda says the compact estate category is growing again, and wants to ride the crest of the wave.

So I shall do my best to look at the car through a family man's eyes.

The Tourer's long, sleek profile is fantastic, although the surface detailing is upset slightly by the bodywork-flush glass around the boot area that sits incongruously next to the door windows, naturally slightly recessed and edged by visible rubber seals.

'Will the family man really worry about that though?' I ask myself. Maybe not. He'll definitely worry about boot space though, so I lift the impressively well-assisted tailgate - an easy job for one hand - and peer into space. Literally. There's 624 litres of it, which is class leading and 19 litres ahead of the Golf estate. Some 117 litres of that space is under the main boot floor in a separate, covered compartment. It's an ingenious feature that saves cases, coats and bags from pinging about inside the boot like the plastic marbles in a game of Hungry Hippos.

The fuel tank has been shifted forward too, to underneath the front seats,

to allow for maximum boot space. There are also plenty of cubby-holes and storage solutions in the cabin, including a big central storage bin that doubles as the location for the multiple media input ports and one of the two 12-volt power sockets that should let the kids charge a compatible device on the move. Enough of the family man charade though: I want to drive the thing to see whether it's more 'young gun' or 'old chap' - or neither.

Firstly, the ride is very good, with this SR model's Adaptive Damper System in Normal mode doing a sterling job of quelling bounce but also absorbing the many bumps. The suspension is a bit loud at times, but the overall experience is great. Secondly, the wide, soft seats are comfier than my own sofa.

But thirdly, and frustratingly, the two digital screens are jarringly old-school in their look and function. Graphics seemingly aping the 1982 film *Tron* don't help, and the way the collected buttons and digital sub-menus are designed and laid out simply isn't user-friendly.

Another negative point is the steering, which on the open road is far too light and completely devoid of feel, or gives the impression thereof, to a degree I've almost never experienced before.

To give it its due, the system is comfortable in town, so the school run, multi-storey car parks and low-speed lane-



• **Honda Civic Tourer**

changes in traffic are all dismissed with ease, but the utter lack of weight or feel can be disconcerting at speed, despite the steering system being very direct and quick to respond.

The petrol engine is smoother and quieter than the gutsier and more frugal diesel, so you'll need to do the maths on whether the fuel economy and road tax savings - it's free for the diesel - are enough to overcome the near - £1,200

price hike. Almost everything a great everyday car needs is in place with the Civic Tourer.

So if your needs fit its big-booted and comfortable-seated talents and if the dated technology doesn't bother you, feel blissfully free to enjoy a car that will handle everything you throw at it, and probably never, ever break down. Now that's a car I could put my family in.



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# Pacesetters Bison sweep aside title rivals Phoenix

DOUG Sheppard's Basingstoke Bison have moved four points clear at the top of the English Premier League (EPL) after a resounding 5-1 win over second-placed Manchester Phoenix on Sunday.

The Herd blew away their opponents at Basingstoke Arena, after grinding out a 4-3 shoot-out victory in South Yorkshire on Saturday night against Sheffield

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Steel dogs.

Tomas Karpov bagged all three goals as Saturday's clash ended three apiece, before Sheppard netted the winning penalty to clinch the extra point for the Herd.

But it was Sunday's performance of energy, verve and flair that really caught the eye and will undoubtedly send a message to the Herd's title rivals.

A sparkling attacking display

saw Basingstoke outshoot the Phoenix by 36-24 during the game, enjoying long spells of puck possession throughout.

The visitors had a good early chance to take the lead, but Dean Skinnis robbed Tony Hand with a superb point blank glove save to keep the game scoreless.

Joe Greener eventually opened the scoring for the Bison at 16:23 as he banked in a shot off of Phoenix netminder Steve Fone from a tight angle, assisted by Nicky Chinn and Kurt Reynolds.

And the Bison added a second goal just 26 seconds later through man of the match Andy

Melachrino, assisted by Michael Wales and Miroslav Vantroba, leaving them with a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes.

The Bison blew the Phoenix away in the second period with three goals in a five-minute span. Melachrino netted his second goal at 24:11, assisted by Karpov and Joe Baird.

Nicky Chinn made it 4-0 at 28:49 after he roofed a rebound from a Ciaran Long effort.

And Karpov, continuing his good form from the evening before made it 5-0 just seconds later as he raced in alone on a breakaway and beat Steve Fone

through the 5-hole.

Such a dominant start blew the Phoenix away, and the Mancunians were forced to call a time-out.

Frantisek Bakrlik got the Phoenix on the board at 35:46 as his powerful shot from the slot beat Dean Skinnis, with assists going to Michel Psurny and Robin Kovar.

But that proved to be the end of the scoring, and the night belonged to the Bison, whose form has picked up spectacularly in the last month or so after an indifferent period where they struggled for consistency.

## Sport Bites

### Rose withdraws

NORTH Hampshire golfer Justin Rose has pulled out of this weekend's Honda Classic tournament in Florida, due to an injury in his right shoulder.

Rose has been suffering with tendinitis in his shoulder all year, but was able to compete in last week's Match Play Championship, where he lost in the second round to South African Ernie Els.

The world number six will hope to return to action at the World Golf Championships in Doral, Florida, from March 6, an event which Rose won two years ago.

### Back in action

BASINGSTOKE RFC return to action on Saturday, following a free week which meant they did not play at the weekend.

They travel to Hertford, who are just two places and four points above 'Stoke in the National League 3 London and South East standings.

'Stoke themselves are 11th with 35 points from 19 games, and are eight clear of relegation threatened Barnes in 12th.

### Sign up for rugby

HAMPSHIRE Youth Rugby League is calling for under-12 teams in the Basingstoke area to sign up for new competitions, which begin later this year.

Fixtures will be played at the ground of Southampton Spitfires Rugby League Club during mini monthly festivals, running from May until August.

Anyone who wants to find out more about the competitions can go to the website: [www.hampshireyouth.rugby-league.com](http://www.hampshireyouth.rugby-league.com).



• Andy Melachrino was man of the match in Basingstoke Bison's impressive 5-1 win over Manchester Phoenix, while Tomas Karpov scored a hat-trick against Sheffield Steel dogs on Saturday (Pictures by Grant King (5holephotography.co.uk))

## Macey's Whitchurch outclass Kingsclere to secure cup progression

WHITCHURCH United progressed to the next round of the Andover Open Cup, as they beat Kingsclere 4-1 at home on Tuesday evening.

But it was the only game to survive the weather, as Tadley

Calleva and Hartley Wintney saw their fixtures postponed.

Tadley's match against Amesbury Town in the Wessex First Division and Wintney's game with Molesey in the Combined Counties Premier were called

off due to waterlogged pitches.

Whitchurch have dropped to ninth in the Wessex Premier Division, although they have games in hand on many of the teams above them in the table.

Tadley are also ninth in their

league, with 22 points from 18 games.

Hartley Wintney are 14th in their table, but after having played just four games so far in 2014, they face having to play 20 matches in the next two

months.

All three will hope to be back in action on Saturday, as Whitchurch host league leaders Winchester City, Tadley are at home to Ringwood Town, and Wintney host Camberley Town.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

Contact the Newsdesk on 01235 516930

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Inside: Pacesetters Bison sweep aside title rivals Phoenix | Sign up for rugby

# BATH ARE STILL SMART-ING!

Bath City 0  
Basingstoke Town 1

**Nathan's terrific long-range strike secures impressive win for Bristow's Dragons**

JASON Bristow felt his side were fully deserving of three points after their impressive away-day display at Bath City on Saturday.

Nathan Smart's blistering 25-yarder five minutes from time flew in off the underside of the bar to give Bristow's men victory over their play-off chasing rivals.

A confident-looking Dragons created several chances in their first competitive fixture in nearly three weeks.

"If we'd have come away with anything less than three points, we would have been really disappointed," said Bristow.

"It was a really good performance, we played really well as a unit - the only disappointing thing is that we didn't make the most of a lot of the opportunities we did have."

And Bristow hailed goalscorer Smart, who has a knack of finding the net with more spectacular efforts.

"It was a fantastic strike from Nathan Smart, which gave us a fully deserved three points," said the Dragons' boss.

"Over the last few years, some of the goals he has scored have been very good strikes from outside the box."

"That's something we've been encouraging the team to do a lot

By James Booker

news@basingsstokeobserver.co.uk

more of recently and that's shoot. And we certainly did that on Saturday."

Bristow admitted the lack of playing time in the last three weeks could have had an adverse effect on his side's return to action, but hailed the way in which his team handled themselves.

"It can go one of two ways - you can go a bit rusty and really struggle to get back into your rhythm, or you can look really hungry and itching to get back on the pitch."

"And fortunately for us the latter was how it worked out."

Basingstoke are up to 10th in the Skrill South, and have games in hand on a lot of teams around them and directly above them.

They face 10 games in an almost impossibly hectic March period, with Maidenhead United the visitors to the Camrose on Saturday.

Saturday's clash is the start of their busiest week of the season - they take on Gosport Borough in the Hampshire Senior Cup on Tuesday night, before travelling to Farnborough on Thursday and making the trip to Dover the following Saturday.



• Nathan Smart (right) struck from 25 yards to give Basingstoke Town the win at Bath City (Picture by Les Chase)

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